



State Representative Kitty Rhoades

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Chairman Mike Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

On behalf of the rural community in my district, I am asking you to support the pending merger of EchoStar Communications and Hughes Electronics' DirecTV currently before the U.S. Committee on the Judiciary.

As we sit in the midst of great technological advancement on a daily basis, access to information and the Internet is more critical than ever in our nations history. In urban communities, the private market has offered residents and businesses ample opportunities to "log on" to the information age, and allow millions of families access to the benefits of the Internet.

However, in rural communities, where private business has not developed the infrastructure needed to offer Internet service, millions of Americans currently do not have access to affordable Internet access, much less the hundreds of cable channels that urban residents take for granted on a daily basis.

To this end, I would urge you to support the pending merger between EchoStar Communications and Hughes Electronics' DirecTV. With this merger, the newly formed company will be better able to compete in the overall telecommunications market, and offer consumers a higher level of television, video and Internet access at competitive prices.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue for rural Wisconsin. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 608-266-1526.

Sincerely,

Kitty Rhoades

State Representative
30th Assembly District